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### Substitute Claims

1-18. (canceled)

19. (currently amended) A message router for routing a message between a server and a plurality of protocol gateways that include processors to encapsulate and transparently convey messages with a plurality of message sources utilizing respective network protocols, the message router comprising:

an authenticator to authenticate that a particular source of a message is an authorized user of a messaging network, said authenticator authenticating said particular source of said message before said message is routed by said message router;

a load balancer module associated with said message router to determine a historical message transmission record for a said plurality of protocol gateways, said transmission record comprising identification of a least recently used protocol gateway supporting a protocol of said source of said message among said plurality of network protocols of message sources; and

routing a processor to route said message based on the said determined least recently used protocol gateway for said source of said message that utilizes said supported protocol.

20. (canceled)

21. (previously presented) The message router according to claim 19, wherein:

said message router is a least recently used message router.

22. (previously presented) The message router according to claim 19, wherein:

said message router routes said message to a most specific server corresponding to a message key.

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23. (previously presented) The message router according to claim 19, wherein:  
said message router routes said message based on a content of said  
message.

24. (currently amended) A method of routing a message between a server and  
a protocol gateway comprising:

providing a plurality of protocol gateways that include processors to  
encapsulate and transparently convey messages with a plurality of message sources  
utilizing respective network protocols;

authenticating that a particular source of a message is an authorized user  
of a messaging network before said message is routed by a message router;

determining from said message router a historical record for a said  
plurality of protocol gateways comprising a least recently used protocol gateway  
supporting a particular protocol of said source of said message among said plurality of  
network protocols; and

routing said message based on the said determined least recently used  
protocol gateway for said particular protocol.

25. (canceled)

26. (previously presented) The method of routing a message according to  
claim 24, wherein:

said server is a least recently used message router.

27. (previously presented) The method of routing a message according to  
claim 24, further comprising:

routing said message to a most specific server corresponding to a  
message key.

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28. (previously presented) The method of routing a message according to claim 24, further comprising:

routing said message based on a content of said message.

29. (currently amended) An apparatus for routing a message between a server and a protocol gateway comprising:

a plurality of protocol gateways that include processors to encapsulate and transparently convey messages with a plurality of message sources utilizing respective network protocols;

means for authenticating that a particular source of a message is an authorized user of a messaging network before said message is routed by a message router;

means for determining from said message router a historical record for a plurality of protocol gateways comprising a least recently used protocol gateway supporting a particular protocol of said source of said message among said plurality of network protocols; and

means for routing said message based on said determined least recently used protocol gateway for said particular protocol.

30. (canceled)

31. (previously presented) The apparatus for routing a message according to claim 29, wherein:

said server is a least recently used message router.

32. (previously presented) The apparatus for routing a message according to claim 29, further comprising:

means for routing said message to a most specific server corresponding to a message key.

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33. (previously presented) The apparatus for routing a message according to claim 29, further comprising:

means for routing said message based on a content of said message.

34-41. (canceled)